

Contributed

OUR BRIGHTSIDE LETTER.

The Green and the Gold.

These autumn afternoons the green and the gold are spread across the lawn and far over the fields. Together they make the world most beautiful in the evening hour. It is the field of the cloth of gold, richer than that one laid for kings and knightly courtiers, after the toil and care of the day, a royal robe is found for an evening dress. The golden light from the sunset skies lives beside the shaded green, so dark and rich.

If the green is of the earth itself, this light of gold, amber and mellowing yellow, is the generous gift of the skies, holding the green earth in its embrace, enriching and beautifying before the night claims it. Without the heavens above, the light, the power and the warmth they give, the world would be poor, indeed, a lonely desolation and a barren waste. It is the vast and beautiful gifts of the skies, golden as the sunlight, which make the fields fruitful and then cover all with beauty.

In the world of our humanity, as well as in the inanimate fields, all is desolation, devoid of beauty, without the life and light, the grace and power of the divine. Around the world our humanity has nothing of good fruit and nothing of true and lasting beauty, save where the divine comes down and comes in to animate and bless. Where the light of God comes down, where the gold of heaven is given to men, there is fruitfulness and growth upward and moral order and all spiritual beauty we ever see on earth. Then is the world green and the golden heavens rest upon it. In the green and gold, "heaven and earth both seem to meet."

It is God and man, the divine and human, that must come together and work together to make the world better, rich and fair. It is the lofty calling of each Christian believer that he is to be co-worker with God in the salvation of the world. The sword of the Lord and of Gideon leads out to battle and to victory. The little brown barley loaves we bring, "What are they among so many?" But the Lord accepts and adds his power and grace and the multitudes are fed abundantly. "By the grace of God I am what I am, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

We only see the divine on earth, as it is in the human, the gold resting on the green. It is by regenerated man, sanctified by God's spirit, quickened into a divine life, that the light of God's love is shed abroad in the world. And is it true also that in the evening of each man's life, the mingling of earth and heaven is richest and most beautiful? "At evening time it shall be light."

When "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," there was the union of God and man, which is "the mystery of the Godhead bodily." The incarnation is the revelation of God and his amazing

love, the condescension most marvelous and adorable, the invitation to us to come back, and the promise and power of a reunited heaven and earth, the green and the gold of God and man. Each evening has its golden message and its promise before the night comes on.

J. P. S.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF MEMPHIS.

The zeal manifested by the churches soon after the war, mentioned in a former article, was particularly gratifying. All the churches were soon supplied with regular ministrations of the Word, Sunday schools were organized, and in many ways spiritual revival was shown. It is regretted that dates and full names can not be given in these reminiscences; however, the facts, with the lessons drawn from them, it is hoped will be both interesting and profitable. At a meeting of the Presbytery in the Hickory Withe church, Rev. John S. Park was chosen moderator, and as was the custom, preached on Sabbath. "An immense congregation of the country people gathered, and it was very noticeable that there was disappointment shown by many that a young man, as his personal appearance made them think, was to preach. It was, however, only a few minutes after he began, until there was pleasurable disappointment. Using as his text, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up." Mr. Park drew a picture of the scene of the camp of Israel and so graphic was his description of the smitten victims, that many felt, as one body expressed it, "The chill of the viper's crawl." This sermon was long remembered, but Mr. Park could never be persuaded to repeat it. Of the ministers present at this meeting, Rev. John S. Park and Rev. W. E. Boggs, D. D., are the only ones now living.

One of the interesting items of business at Presbyteries in those days was the examination of candidates for license or ordination; or of applicants for membership on certificates from other Presbyteries. The old time Presbyterians were accustomed to be present on these occasions, and men, women and children gave strict attention to these examinations, and doubtless profited thereby. Relative to the examination of Dr. W. E. Boggs on his joining the Presbytery of Memphis, the writer remembers that it was very exhaustive, and evidently intended for the edification of the younger members of Presbytery, as well as for the congregation present. An old man who had listened to the entire examination was heard to remark, "That man's mother certainly fed him on the catechism, as a good starter."

The dreadful scourge of yellow fever in 1878 in the city of Memphis and surrounding country took off many of God's people from the earthly service to that of the other world. Among these were Rev. — — Bowman, of the Memphis First church; Rev. Wm. Johnson, Ala-

bama Street church; Rev. Dr. John H. Rice, of Mason church; and Rev. Frank Howell, of the Sumerville church. These fell while nobly standing at their posts, and left a heritage of sacred memories to their pastorates and the church generally. For some years previous to this, there had been a happy state of brotherly intercourse among the ministers and the various churches. Frequent protracted meetings were held by the ministers assisting one another, and religious interest was very marked. Young men were offering themselves for the ministry, the meetings of presbytery were well attended, and proved to be occasions of spiritual uplift to the churches where these meetings were held. An intimate acquaintance had grown among the churches with the ministers of the presbytery, so that deep interest was felt for each individual minister during that long protracted season of sorrow. When it was over, there was not only great rejoicing that all the under shepherds had stood by their flocks, but also sincere admiration for the men themselves and deep-felt gratitude to God for such noble examples of Christian heroism.

Incidental. At a meeting of Presbytery the sermon on Sabbath morning was most profoundly solemn, and was followed by the sacrament of the Lord's Supper fittingly observed. That day the minister who preached, and a number of other members of presbytery, were entertained at one of the old-time country homes. There were also a number of young persons in the company. To the surprise, not to say the worst of it, this minister, who had during the morning deeply impressed all the hearers by his eloquent handling of the divine truth, at the table and during the afternoon monopolized the conversation by relating experiences, and telling amusing anecdotes, and not at all indicative of spiritual feeling or Sabbath day reverence. This incident was indeed unusual, for the memories of the meetings of presbytery are of sweet Christian fellowship and religious conversation that in point of privilege are found no where else.

Grateful was I that I was permitted to revisit the scenes of former days and meet many old friends. Better still to call up blessed memories. What besides memories can we certainly lay up for future pleasure?

Correspondent.

Natural religion, the religion of human reason, though perfected and commended by the wise and supported by the powerful, withers even in the genial atmosphere of State patronage. Revealed religion, the religion of the Bible, the religion of the crucified Christ, flourishes amid the severest persecutions and survives even the stabs and betrayals of its pretended friends. The amazing difference is to be traced to the Cross of Christ: to the Jew a stumbling block; to the Greek foolishness; but to them who are saved, the wisdom of God and the power of God.